

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A covered stent comprising individual stent rings alternately loaded inside and outside a covering material, wherein the rings are not connected longitudinally; and

wherein the stent rings loaded inside the covering material are stronger than the stent rings loaded outside the covering material.

2. (Original) The stent of claim 1 wherein the covering material is selected from the group consisting of ePTFE and PET.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) The stent of claim 1 wherein some of the stent is uncovered to aid in anchoring the vessel.

5. (Original) The stent of claim 1 wherein foreshortening is reduced in comparison to a longitudinally connected stent.

6. (Original) The stent of claim 1 wherein there are no perforations through the covering material.

7. A covered stent comprising individual stent rings alternately loaded inside and outside a covering material, wherein the rings are not connected longitudinally; and

~~The stent of claim 1~~ wherein the stent rings loaded inside the covering are larger in their unconstrained state than the stents loaded on the outside of the covering.

8. (Original) The stent of claim 1 where gaps between alternating stent rings when expanded are of sufficient length to prevent touching of the stent structures when they are crimped to the diameter at which they are delivered.

9. (Original) The stent of claim 1 where the features of the adjacent stent rings are aligned so that they do not interfere with one another when the composite stent is placed in a bend.

10. (Original) The stent of claim 1 wherein the covering material is selected from the group consisting of ePTFE, PET, UHMWPE (ultra high molecular weight polyethylene), polyester polyarylate, and PEEK (polyester ether ketone).

11. (New) The stent of claim 7 wherein the covering material is selected from the group consisting of ePTFE and PET.

12. (New) The stent of claim 7 wherein the stent rings loaded inside the covering material are stronger than the stent rings loaded outside the covering material.

13. (New) The stent of claim 7 wherein some of the stent is uncovered to aid in anchoring the vessel.

14. (New) The stent of claim 7 wherein foreshortening is reduced in comparison to a longitudinally connected stent.

15. (New) The stent of claim 7 wherein there are no perforations through the covering material.

16. (New) The stent of claim 7 where the stent rings loaded inside the covering are larger in their unconstrained state than the stents loaded on the outside of the covering.

17. (New) The stent of claim 7 where gaps between alternating stent rings when expanded are of sufficient length to prevent touching of the stent structures when they are crimped to the diameter at which they are delivered.

18. (New) The stent of claim 7 where the features of the adjacent stent rings are aligned so that they do not interfere with one another when the composite stent is placed in a bend.

19. (New) The stent of claim 7 wherein the covering material is selected from the group consisting of ePTFE, PET, UHMWPE (ultra high molecular weight polyethylene), polyester polyarylate, and PEEK (polyester ether ketone).